Aviation Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC)

What is it?

The U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence's (USAACE) BOLC-B is a nine-week, three-day resident course designed to train newly commissioned lieutenants with the requisite technical, tactical, leadership, and general knowledge of common military subjects and combined arms training to efficiently serve as active and Reserve Component Aviation company-grade section or platoon leaders. The course is taught at Fort Rucker, Ala., with a course emphasis on initial aviation indoctrination, and includes training on Army digital systems, mission planning, field and unit motor maintenance, and aviation leadership and troop leading procedures. Currently, Phase I and Phase II are taught sequentially. The BOLC falls under 1st Aviation Brigade. There are 24 courses taught each year with an optimum class size of 20 students.

What has the Army Aviation done?

Recently, the commanding general of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) approved the TRADOC Initial Military Training (IMT) deputy commanding general's directive to restructure BOLC throughout the Army. The course of action included the elimination of BOLC II and the transfer of specific tasks from BOLC II to BOLC III. This dramatically changed the time and place certain IMT is conducted. The end result became a modified Branch BOLC (BOLC-B) ready for implementation in March 2010.

Army Aviation implemented the plan several months early to ensure complete success by the implementation date. This course replaces what was previously the Aviation Basic Officer Leader Course III A (BOLC III A) and Aviation Basic Officer Leader Course III B (BOLC III B). Army Aviation is also in the process of integrating Junior Officer Professional Development (JOPD) into the new BOLC-B to eliminate redundant training and combine BOLC tasks wherever possible to lessen the number of officers in a waiting-for-training status. Because of many similarities in the Warrant Officer's skill and knowledge requirements, the BOLC shares many training opportunities with Aviation Warrant Officers. The Initial Entry Rotary Wing (IERW) Course and Advanced Aircraft Courses follow successful completion of BOLC.

What continued efforts does Army Aviation have planned for the future?

Army Aviation is currently in the process of a BOLC Redesign. The goal is to shorten the length of the course and eliminate redundant training by combining the two phases into one Program of Instruction (POI), affording newly commissioned lieutenants training that is relevant to their future roles and responsibilities.

Why is this important to the Army and Army Aviation?

Army Aviation plays a critical role across the battlefield. The Attack, Reconnaissance, Lift, Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) and Maintenance missions are key to the success of Army Warfighting. It is necessary that Army Aviation Officers be provided the best training to prepare them for full spectrum operations.

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